

**Report from Stigma & Discrimination Plank
Washington State Summit of Mental Health Consumers & Survivors
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A large group of about 20 vocal advocates actively took part in the Stigma & Discrimination Plank. The discussion began with a charged brainstorming activity during which time participants were asked to come up with ways to combat both internal and external stigma and discrimination. Common themes included:

- The need to retrain medical staff in “asset-based” language—out with the “problem-focused”, “deficit-based” language
- Address provider stigma
- Need to use the media to educate and influence public opinion
- Share personal experience with mental illness to decrease level of shame associated with it
- Respond to false statements about mental illness

Outcome # 1: Consumers become public speakers who educate the public and the media

Strategies/Next Steps:

1. Ad campaign
2. Two people per county affiliate willing and prepared to tell their story
3. Define the message = e.g. not ‘them’ vs. ‘us’
4. Train on language – people first
5. Identify state ‘leaders’ who are consumers
6. Schedule events

Outcome # 2: Create seminars for providers and work for policy requiring mandated training

Strategies/Next Steps:

1. Educate about recovery at middle schools, colleges and community colleges
2. Facts about recovery
3. Terminology
4. Promote provider and consumer partnerships

Outcome # 3: Reduce discrimination in housing, employment and access to care

Strategies/Next Steps: - Same as #1 & #2